

OGDEN CENTER FOREST SERVICE WORK FOR INTERMOUNTAIN WEST

Activities Prove Important Factor in Development of Natural Resources of Vast Territory North, South, East and West of Junction City Where Land Bearing Heaviest and Highest Valued Timber Lies—Promotes Projects Designed to Be of Greatest Interest to Public in General.

A brief insight into the work and business being conducted through the Ogden offices of the Forest Service, at Twenty-fourth and Lincoln, will give the visitor to the city a new appreciation of the vast scale on which this feature of governmental activity is carried on, and a more thorough realization of its important bearing on the community life and industrial development of the intermountain region.

The field of the Forest Service organization extends into nineteen states, Porto Rico and Alaska, where it is applying policies of protection, development and business administration to approximately 156 million acres of the public lands. The service is practically a western institution, since in this portion of the country are found the greatest national forest areas, and here the bulk of its work is done and its most difficult

problems met and solved. In the matter of area included within the forests California ranks first, Idaho second and Montana third. The twelve forests of Utah comprise a net area of 7,449,000 acres. One of the unusual features of the forests situated as to extend into every one of Utah's twenty-eight counties, thus enabling every county to share to a greater or less extent in the receipts derived from the operation of the service.

Cover Western Mountain Ranges. The forests cover largely the chief mountain ranges of the West; the Rockies, the Sierras, the Cascades, the Uta and Wasatch, and the smaller, scattered Basin ranges of the intermountain states.

The effectual protection and conservation of the watersheds of these ranges is of the utmost importance to

western agriculture, dependent as it is upon a constant and generous supply of water for irrigation, and in all administrative policies of the forest service the factor of watershed protection, through prevention and prompt suppression of forest fires, reforestation of denuded or burned over areas, prevention of wasteful or excessive cutting of timber and proper utilization of forage is considered of prime importance.

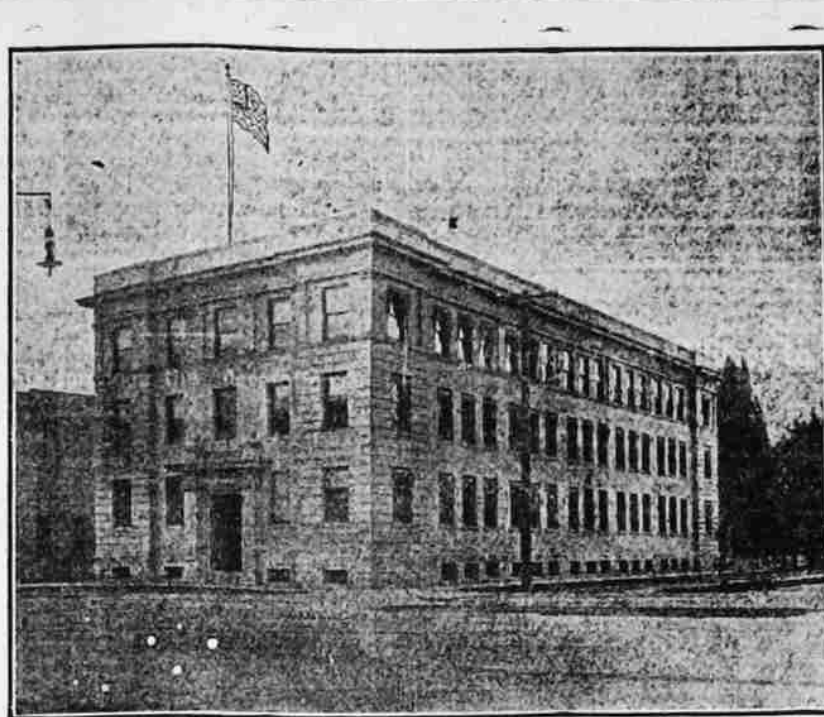
Six hundred billion board feet of merchantable timber, or about 20 per cent of the total supply available in the United States, is found within the national forests. This summer approximately two million cattle and horses, sixty thousand swine, and eight and one-half million sheep and goats are utilizing the splendid forage growing on the forest ranges. Grazing permits are issued annually to over thirty thousand livestock owners, and in return the annual revenues of the forest service from its grazing business amount to approximately \$1,200,000. The handling of this large scale of livestock business is exceedingly important, and in the intermountain district perhaps the most important feature of the work of the service.

The 153 units into which the forest lands are divided for purposes of administration, averaging in area about a million acres, and termed national forests, prior to 1908, were under the direct supervision of the office of the forester at Washington, which worked directly through the various forest supervisors, on the ground. In 1908 it became apparent that the administration of the forests should be brought closer to the people of the west, who were most vitally affected by the work of the service, and accordingly, the forests were grouped into six districts, with headquarters in six of the chief business centers of the western states.

Headquarters in Ogden. The headquarters of District No. 4, or the Intermountain District, as it is commonly known, were located at Ogden. The district boundaries were drawn to include all of Utah, the southern half of Idaho, the southwestern portion of Wyoming, almost all of Nevada and that part of Arizona lying north of the Grand canyon. In selecting a headquarters for the district the relative advantages of different intermountain cities were considered, before the choice finally fell upon Ogden. The three-story office building which the organization now occupies, at the corner of Lincoln avenue and Twenty-fourth street, was erected especially for the service by Mr. Fred J. Kiesel, in 1908. Eight years of active operation in Ogden has now made the district headquarters a permanent feature of the city.

Plenty of Marketable Timber. The thirty-one national forests comprising the district, total 29 million acres, and contain approximately 28 billion board feet of merchantable timber. The forests of southern Idaho and southwestern Wyoming are the most heavily timbered in the district, although the Utah and Nevada forests are none the less important from the standpoints of watershed protection, grazing and other uses.

This season 12,000 stockmen are using the forest ranges of this district, grazing 457,000 cattle and horses and 2,257,000 sheep. These numbers



U. S. Forestry Building, Ogden, Utah.

represent about 25 per cent of all the cattle and horses, and 40 per cent of all the sheep grazed on the national forests of the country. Local settlers and stockmen have the first right to the use of the range, just as in the case of the other forest resources, and every man who grazes sheep on the forest, under permit, is allotted a certain area for the grazing season. The cattle usually run in community herds, or are allowed to drift at will within the confines of a certain range division. Unfair competition between the big and small owner, which in earlier years was a constant source of friction and trouble, is by this method eliminated. A good supply of forage year after year is assured by not allowing the overstocking and consequent overgrazing of any forest range.

Timber Land Carefully Cruised. Nearly five million acres of timber land within the district has been carefully cruised, and the timber stands estimated, mapped and prepared for market. The excessive cost of mountain logging as compared with cost of logging on the Pacific coast, and the low price prevailing for imported lumber during the past year and in previous years have combined to lessen the production of local lumber. Last year eighteen per cent of the lumber used in Utah, southern Idaho and southwestern Wyoming was produced locally. However, the local forest service district does a timber sale business amounting to about \$100,000 annually, and indications point to a gradual but steady increase in local production, with a corresponding increase in imports. Most of the sales now made are for relatively small amounts of timber for strictly local purposes. A total of over 3,400 sales were made during the fiscal year just closed, involving the cutting of over 35 million feet of timber. Twenty-nine billion board feet is the figure given for the total stand of merchantable timber within the district, and this includes some of the finest bodies of

timber to be found anywhere. If this timber were accessible to transportation facilities, and it is becoming more so from year to year, it would meet the entire needs of the region for a period of fifty years, without reducing the growing stand.

Agricultural Lands in Forests.

Lands within the national forests suitable for agricultural development, are open to homestead entry, under the Forest Homestead Act of June 11, 1906. Under this act filings are allowed in areas not to exceed 160 acres. Over 2,000 such entries have been allowed in District 4 to date, involving over 260,000 acres of land. Since the season of 1912, the forest service has been making final proof surveys for all homestead claimants within the forests free of charge. Under the old procedure these entrymen were required to hire a surveyor, approved by the government, to make survey of their claim before final proof could be made and patent issued, in all cases where the claim involved unsurveyed land, or irregular tracts of surveyed land. Over 400 such surveys have been made within District 4 since the inauguration of the work, an activity which has necessitated keeping two or more survey crews constantly in the field during the open season.

All of the lands within the forests are now undergoing a process of classification, the result of which will be to eliminate all areas chiefly valuable for agricultural purposes. Authority was secured to do this work in 1912, with the idea of accomplishing more quickly and satisfactorily, the result which the forest homestead act would eventually bring about. On several of the intermountain forests this work has been completed, and its complete accomplishment is now in sight.

How System Works.

When the forests were established as such, they were rough, inaccessible and largely devoid of facilities for transportation or communication. An immense amount of work has

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